

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 SSO-00 INR-07

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FM AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 757

S E C R E T MUSCAT 031

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, MU, IR

SUBJECT: LATE DEVELOPMENT IN DHOFAR CAMPAIGN

REF: MUSCAT 927

1. FOLLOWING INFORMATION CONCERNING DEVELOPMENTS IN DHOFAR CAMPAIGN SUBSEQUENT TO SUBMISSION OF REFTEL PROVIDED TO CHARGE BY BRITISH EMBASSY SOURCE WHO REQUESTED THAT IT BE CLOSELY HELD.

2. IRANIAN TROOPS CAPTURED RAKHYUT JANUARY 7. TOWN PRESUMABLY ABANDONED PRIOR TO OCCUPATION, AND IT IS NOT KNOWN WHETHER ANY SIGNIFICANT MATERIEL TAKEN BY IRANIANS. UK EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS THAT IRANIANS NOW WILL HOLD EVEREST-RAKHYUT LINE, PERHAPS EVENTUALLY BUILDING UP PHYSICAL BARRIERS TO FORM A SORT-OF HORNBEAM LINE COUNTERPART.

3. SAF OPERATION AGAINST SHIRISHITTI LAUNCHED ON SCHEDULE JANUARY 4. THERE WAS SOME DELAY, POSSIBLY DUE TO LEADERSHIP PROBLEMS. AT ANY RATE, CSAF CREASEY REPLACED BRITISH BRIGADE COMMANDER. TWO SAF COMPANIES SORTIED TOWARDS CAVES EVENING OF JANUARY 6. THEY MET STIFF RESISTANCE, AND IN FIGHTING ONE OF BRITISH COMPANY

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COMMANDERS KILLED, ANOTHER BRITISH OFFICER WIA.

FOLLOWING ENGAGEMENT, SAF PULLED BACK; CSAF PRESENTLY AT SITE, AND IT IS UNCLEAR WHAT NEXT MOVES MIGHT BE. INTELLIGENCE SERVICES ESTIMATE SOME 200 PFLO TROOPS IN AREA. SAF CASUALTIES SINCE JAN 4 ARE 12 OMANIS KIA; 21 OMANIS WIA; 1 BRITISH KIA; 6 BRITISH WIA.

4. TOTAL IRANIAN CASUALTIES SINCE BEGINNING OF OFFENSIVE ON DEC. 2 NOW STAND AT 50 KIA AND 70 WIA.

5. COMMENT: LATEST SAF EXPERIENCE MIGHT MAKE THEM MORE APPRECIATIVE OF DIFFICULTIES IN OPERATING AGAINST PFLO IN AN AREA WHEREIN REBELS HAD BEEN UNCONTESTED FOR AT LEAST SIX YEARS. AT ANY RATE, IRANIAN STOCK SHOULD RISE NOW THAT THEY HAVE ACHIEVED OBJECTIVE OF TAKING RAKHYUT. ZWEIFEL

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